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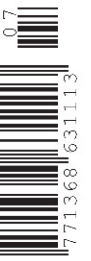
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BRINGING *the outside in*

Phillip Smart transforms Killerton's Park Cottage
into a stylish eco-escape

WORDS BY ANNA TURNS PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD DOWNER



THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

Below: The kitchen by Devol incorporates as much storage as possible without minimising the space, botanical prints decorate the walls
Bottom: Four big wooden letters spell gift on the shelf of the reception dining room, alongside historic photos



With botanical illustrations on the walls, wildlife guides on the bookshelves and triple-aspect windows framing glorious views of the surrounding countryside, the flora and fauna of Killerton are the stars of the show at Park Cottage. One of five holiday cottages on the 6500 acre National Trust estate, Park Cottage has recently undergone a huge transformation, incorporating all the fundamental aspects of sustainability and energy-efficiency in the design and décor of this 1920's Edwardian Grade II* listed carriage lodge.

Killerton Estate General Manager Phillip

Smart knew he'd need an expert design team on board to make his strong vision a reality and updating this period property with all the right eco mod-cons. "I wanted to bring the cottage into the 21st century and use it in a sustainable way, balancing the old with the new. I knew I wasn't just looking for an architect and interior designer for this project, I needed a special partnership. Finding Gavin and Sarah Woodford as a team was an ideal match. They understood exactly where I was coming from," explains Phillip. Woodford Architecture and Interiors is based in Ashburton, on the edge of Dartmoor, so Gavin and Sarah are living and breathing the natural environment

and they are passionate about conservation and sustainability.

When creating a bespoke holiday property, there is an art to getting the right balance between keeping a blank canvas that suits many whilst adding enough personality so that visitors appreciate its character. "I wanted to make sure each of our holiday cottage locations would be special. I could see the potential in this property as a holiday cottage, so when a staff member moved out and Park Cottage became available, I got stuck in," says Phillip, a trained landscape architect. "I appreciate the expertise of design, and that's why for this scheme we involved an external designer

“I wanted to bring the cottage into the 21st century and use it in a sustainable way, balancing the old with the new”

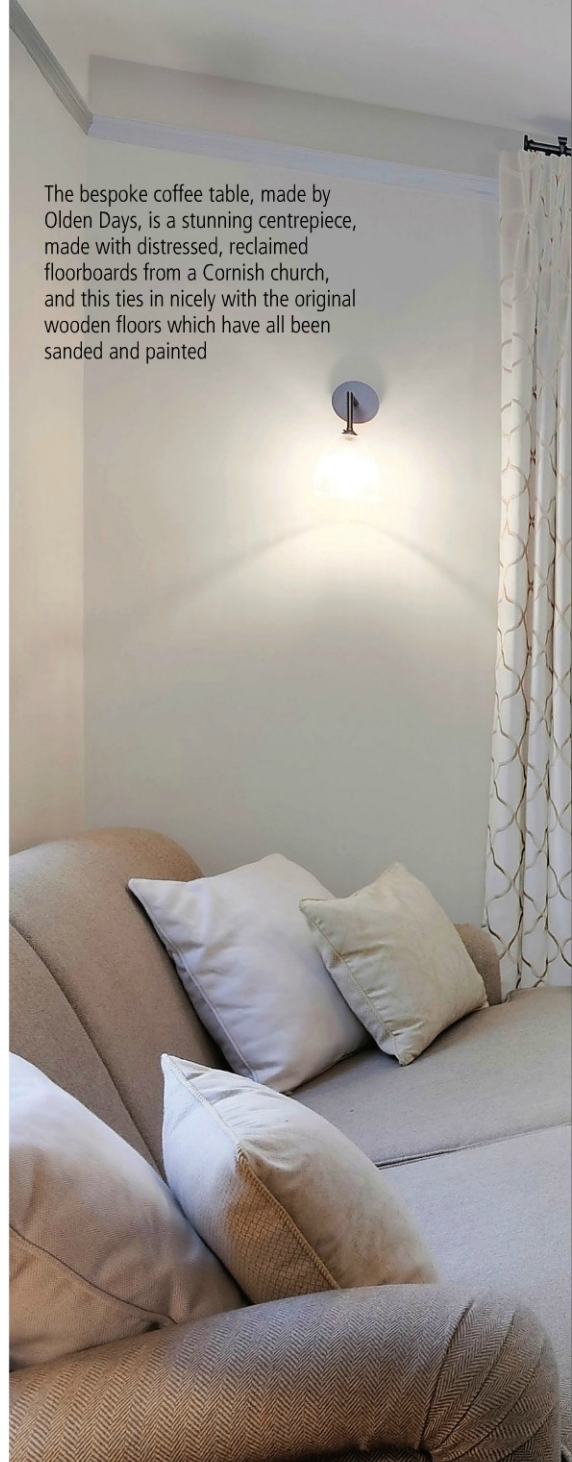
Woodford Architecture and Interiors and Exeter-based contractor Hindsite who know what we expect in terms of a high standard of finish.” Being a listed building, everything needed planning permission and listed building permission to make sure it all stayed in keeping with the style. “Structurally, only one internal wall was removed as we wanted to maintain the proportions, and we built a garden shed, but the whole interior has changed to fit with the historic landscape.”

The purpose-built shed, built on-site from Killerton larch, is fitted with solar PV panels (these would have had too much impact on the cottage roof) and contains the mechanics for the air-source heat pump. “The pump is an amazing piece of technology – it takes heat out of atmosphere, condenses it and turns it in

to energy,” explains Phillip. “It works like a fridge in reverse and solar panels provide the power to run the heat pump.” It also doubles up as a bike store and log shed: “It is amazing how much we pack into one shed and we have used all the resources available on the estate. The garden gates, pergola, fences and tree trunk seats around the fire pit are also made from timber produced in our woodlands.”

As you walk in - through the new porch built to reduce heat loss - and step over the National Trust oak leaf doormat, the story of Killerton is prominent from the start. Phillip explains: “This photo of Richard and Anna Acland was taken on the day they bequeathed the estate to the National Trust, as their gift to the nation, so you are immediately faced with the

The bespoke coffee table, made by Olden Days, is a stunning centrepiece, made with distressed, reclaimed floorboards from a Cornish church, and this ties in nicely with the original wooden floors which have all been sanded and painted

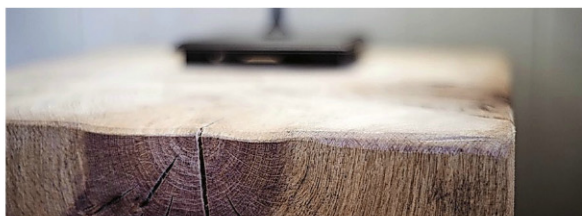


Below: The striped runner is 100% wool and therefore is naturally fire retardant and requires no chemical treatment



Above: The living room feels elegant yet informal with countryside prints which bring a splash of colour and a reminder of the surroundings

Right: Solid oak bedside pedestals (made on-site by Killerton’s carpenters) give a chunky rustic look





detail of Killerton's story."

Interior designer, Sarah Woodford has used natural, calming colours throughout the house to give a relaxed feel. There's a continuous flow between each room and high ceilings are enhanced by the light colour scheme.

Hard-wearing quarry floor tiles run through the kitchen, hallway and dining room – these echo the original external wall-hung clay tiling, adapting familiar design elements to give a timeless feel.

The living room feels elegant yet informal, with the television concealed in an original alcove cupboard. Chairs have been upholstered in different fabrics to give an eclectic feel, and Sarah chose contrasting piping to add a playful touch.

Phillip, Gavin and Sarah have done as much as possible to make Park Cottage

energy efficient – a challenge in a period property. Double-glazing was considered, but they agreed it would become a barrier and detract from the feeling of being in touch with the environment. "Hearing birdsong through the windows when you wake up and bringing the outside in is a big part of your stay," says Phillip.

Windows are a character feature at this historic property. "As implied by the quirky triple-aspect windows, if you lived here in the 1900's you would have been responsible for looking out for people arriving, then running out and opening the gate for them." Sarah chose to dress the windows throughout the house with roman blinds in a linen fabric to frame each view and incorporate surroundings into the design of each room. In the living room, drapes frame the triple aspect

Elements of eco-design:

This eco-refurbishment has increased the energy efficiency of Park Cottage by over 50%, bringing it up from F rating to B. Here's how:

- Ethically-sourced furniture/local tradesmen
- Low-impact production methods
- Source responsibly within the UK; use reclaimed or FSC-certified timber, or vintage products.
- Low-energy lightbulbs
- Maximum insulation; cavity wall insulation in exterior walls, plus mineral wool insulation between floors and in the loft space
- Alternative energy sources: air-source heat pump and photovoltaic panels.



The ceiling in the master bedroom is creatively decorated with handprinted wallpaper by Rapture & Wright, inspired by the arts and crafts era

window and to soften the room.

Artwork ties in well with the period of the cottage and each illustration is a reminder of the strong history of gardening and wildlife connections at Killerton, each chosen by Sarah.

The kitchen is light and practical, incorporating energy-efficient appliances and giving a nod to domestic spaces of the past: shaker peg rails encircle the room, cream brick tiles give it a working kitchen feel, and decorative holes in the door of the larder cupboard provide ventilation.

Upstairs in the master bedroom, the ceiling is creatively decorated with handprinted wallpaper inspired by the arts and crafts era resulting in a dramatic effect whilst remaining light and airy. "After staying here and waking up to this, I realised how amazing this effect is," says Phillip. "My two young sons clambered

into bed with me and spent ages looking up, saying 'I feel like I'm floating on the clouds' – I love it."

A lot of thought has gone into each element of the bedroom. The mantle piece is peppered with upcycled house pots and inkwells true to the Edwardian era which Sarah sourced from vintage stores and charity shops to accessorise in a simple yet effective way. Solid oak bedside pedestals give a chunky rustic look. "The wood changes as it dries out and takes shape, so they are different every time I come up here." The shaker peg rails continue through both bedrooms and the ceiling of the twin bedroom is covered by soft sage green paper with the effect of a network of branches. A framed bird print by Cornish artist Breon O'Casey is suggestive of Sarah's imagined 'treehouse' room.

The third bedroom has been converted to a big, luxurious bathroom, with a restored fireplace. Simple lines are left to speak for themselves, without clutter. The beautiful, free-standing, rolltop bath is painted to match the colour scheme.

Phillip is delighted with the end result: "Flicking through the visitors' book and seeing how much people appreciate it makes my job all the more satisfying and I'm proud that my vision has become a working reality."

Phillip explains that when the PV panels are creating more energy than that required in the cottage, excess energy can be exported back to the National Grid. "I'm pleased that Park Cottage allows us to demonstrate that it is possible to live in an eco-friendly and sustainable way in this historic property." ■ woodfordarchitecture.com



The Breon O'Casey print used as a focal point in the bedroom and the stylised branch motif wallpaper enhances the relaxed tree house feel

HOME TRUTHS

Phillip's favourite item:

The oak bedside pedestals. Being a boy, I also like the shed, because it's so useful and multi-functional.



Phillip's favourite room:

The master bedroom - the views are stunning and the wallpaper on the ceiling makes you feel like you are floating in the sky!

Sarah's top decorating tip:

Be bold with wallpaper and use it in unexpected ways. Here, we have used wallpaper on the ceilings; it also can add interest behind shelves or as a lining inside cupboards or drawers.



Sarah's colour advice:

Use colours that reinforce the feeling that you want your spaces to evoke. For a dramatic formal dining room consider dark or bold colours, if you are looking to create a tranquil space, use neutral cool colours.

The generous bathroom is furnished with traditionally styled sanitary ware all made in the UK



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